
The old stereotype of the tough Australian male has been reinforced this week. A new study from the University of New South Wales has discovered that on average Aussie fathers only spend six minutes with their children from Monday to Friday.

The report may make **unsettling** reading for Australian fathers for it discovered that on average they spend just over a minute each day alone with their children during the busy **working week**. In a country that's sometimes been unfairly viewed as a **bastion** of **male chauvinism** the study appeared to **reinforce** that view.

It found that fathers were more likely to spend time with their children in the park, or at sports events, but rarely participated in feeding, bathing, or **ferrying children to and from** school.

Mothers in Australia tend to spend three hours each week purely looking after their children, a much greater **disparity** than other countries like America, Denmark, Italy and France, where couples divide their childcare more evenly.

According to the author of the study, Australian fathers appear to like the fun aspects of parenthood, but shy away from the **drudgery**. They tend to contribute when they're free, likely to enjoy themselves and therefore tend to look upon childcare as another leisure activity. Australian parenting is seen as a woman's job and a man's hobby.

In fairness to Australian men, they do tend to work longer hours than their **counterparts** in America, Denmark, Italy and France.

By Nick Bryant, Sydney

unsettling	disturbing, uncomfortable
working week	period from Monday to Friday
bastion	place where something is defended against change
male chauvinism	the belief of some men that they are better than women
reinforce	agree with and strengthen
ferrying children to and from	taking children to and from
disparity	difference
drudgery	hard and boring work
in fairness to	to be fair to, in defence of
counterparts	equivalents, here - men

Read and listen to the story and the vocabulary online:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2008/10/081022_australian_men